

**Public Safety Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
January 19, 2022  
6:00 PM  
Council Chambers**

**Members Present**

Councilor Chris Rice, Chair  
Councilor Peter Lachapelle, Vice Chair  
Councilor Dana Berlin  
Councilor Skip Gilman  
Councilor Amy Malone

**Others Present**

Councilor John LaRochelle  
Michael Bezanson, PE, City Engineer  
Deputy Chief Jason Thomas, PD  
Interim Fire Chief Perry Plummer, FD  
Assistant Chief Tim Wilder, FD  
Chris Bowlen, Director of Recreation & Arena  
Dan Camara, GIS Asset Mgmt. Technician

**Minutes**

Councilor Rice brought the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

- 1. Approve Minutes from December 15, 2021 Public Safety Meeting.**  
***Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to approve the minutes from December 15, 2021. The motion was seconded by Councilor Malone. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.***

**2. Public Input**

Councilor Rice asked if there was any public input and there was no one present for public input. Councilor Rice said he received an email regarding street name changes from Geraldine Lark and wanted to read it for the record. She stated in her email that “as an elderly people, my husband and I are unable to attend evening meetings, but I would like to bring to your attention some confusion caused by the Street-Name changes that occurred in September 2019, namely: did anyone notify the GPS system of these changes? I live at 24 Pickering Road, the former 67 Main Street. In the past 2 years, I’ve had to call an ambulance twice, and each time, they’ve gone whizzing past our house, on their way to the \*old\* 24 Pickering Road-which is what came up when they entered the address into GPS. I’ve had friends and furniture deliveries with the same problem. Even my weather app shows our address as 67 Main Street. Now, the point of the Street-Name changes was supposed to be making it easier for emergency services to find the address. That only works, though if someone notifies GPS that in fact, addresses have changed. And I suspect I’m not the only resident of Rochester who would like to see this matter tidied. Thank you for seeing to it. Sincerely Geraldine Lark.” Councilor Lachapelle asked if the City usually notifies Google about the E911 changes. Councilor Rice said that the email was also sent to the Assistant Chief and Shanna Saunders, Planning Director; and, she was going to look in to it. Assistant Chief Wilder of the Fire Department said that the State E911 works with

Google to change addresses, but the State works on their timing; they can lag behind a little bit. He stated he can confirm the address is changed for 911 to make sure that when she picks up the phone to dial that it is the correct address, 24 Pickering Road. He said he can't speak for ambulance and how they train and learn the streets, but if they are relying on their cell phones to get to an address and it hasn't been updated then they will not get to the right address. Councilor Rice asked if it was 911 or the State's responsibility to contact Google for any street changes. Assistant Chief Wilder said he doesn't think it's their responsibility, but they do it. They send an updated list to Google and it is sent out from there. Interim Fire Chief Plummer said they can certainly talk to the ambulance service through the Public Safety Committee to make sure they have the changes locally until it gets changed in Google. Deputy Chief Thomas said there have been a couple of calls there at 24 Pickering Road and they have had no problems; if you put in GPS, it still brings you further down the road.

### **3. Squamanagonic Gate Discussion (kept in committee)**

Councilor Rice summarized the issue. He stated that he would like to move the Squamanagonic Gate Discussion up on the agenda; Chris Bowlen, Director of Recreation & Arena, was present to discuss this item. Councilor Lachapelle updated the new committee members on this item. He said that Squamanagonic is a park off the beaten path; it's unique because it sets way back off the road; and, they have had some illegal activity back there. They had put a gate up and it has caused some issues with parking for the Disc Golf Course users. Now they are looking at alternate types of gates. Mr. Bowlen said that Squamanagonic and Disc Golf Course is located off Hansonville Road in Gonic. Through the course of 8 months through some of the issues there was a gate erected further down near the "Y" in the road; left goes to the shooting range, and right goes to the parking for the Disc Golf Course. From that gate back to Hansonville Road DPW cleared the area alongside the entrance road for more parking, but it has been insufficient for the users of the park. He stated that back in October he came to the Public Safety Committee with users of the Disc Golf Course. Mr. Bowlen said the Disc Golf Course is known throughout the State and region; there are 18 holes there covering the more than 45 acres of the park. People come from all over to play here and want to continue to promote it. They are looking at some solutions and have been working with Buildings & Grounds and DPW; they have queued up a project in the upcoming budget for review. Mr. Riley, Buildings and Grounds Supervisor, has found an automatic gate system that would work here and isn't as cost-prohibitive as they initially thought. The power would have to be reintroduced to the site; there would be no cost because they gain a new customer. Total project cost for the gate and a light is estimated to be \$15,000; and, the majority of that cost is to have an electrician install the service to operate the gate. The gate is planned to be set up to automatically open and close at certain times, right now the park is open ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset. If someone were to get closed in behind the gate, there will be a sensor to open the gate and let vehicles out; there is also an access code that can be used for emergency entry or if staff need to get back there. Mr. Bezanson added that DPW was able to fit

this project funding into the Department's O&M Budget request. Councilor Rice asked if this new gate was going to be placed near the "Y" in the road. Mr. Bowlen said, no it was going to be placed at the site of the original gate closer to Hansonville Road; they think that would be the best spot for it. Councilor Rice said he drove by during one of the Disc Golf events and there were approximately 35 cars there; it is widely used and he appreciates staff coming up with a solution and he supports it. Councilor Lachapelle said no action had to be taken because it's included in the O&M Budget request and they will discuss it during Budget deliberations. Councilor Rice asked about the current gate that is there now. Mr. Bowlen said once the automatic gate is, in with the Deputy Chief's blessing, they would like to move the current gate over to the left hand side of the "Y", so that cars entering the park for the Disc Golf Course can't drive down to the shooting range. PD would have a key to access when needed. Councilor Lachapelle said since the Disc Golf Course has been there, the users have been good stewards and have taken it upon themselves to police the area; he said it is a good activity.

#### **4. Meeting Dates**

Councilor Rice wanted to discuss future meeting dates of the Public Safety Committee for 2022. He submitted a calendar with the agenda packet that has each committee that meets in Council Chambers on it and stated that the Committee has usually met on the third Wednesday of each month. He wanted to know if the third Wednesdays at 6:00 pm works for everyone or if the Committee would like to change the date and time. The Committee was in favor of keeping the Public Safety Committee at 6:00 pm every third Wednesday of each month.

#### **5. Flat Rock Bridge Road/Salmon Falls Road Intersection Safety Concerns (kept in committee)**

Councilor Rice summarized the issue. The house 107 Salmon Falls Road was being rented out and they were having a problem exiting the driveway because the dealership next door was parking in the right-of-way and on her property; there were line-of-sight safety concerns. Mr. Bezanson has had a discussion with the surveyor who did the surveying for the property owner. The surveyor is preparing a proposal for delineating right-of-way lines through the Flat Rock Bridge/Salmon Falls Road intersection area. Flat Rock Bridge Road will likely be on the paving list in the next couple of years; and, it will be helpful to pinpoint the edge of the City's right-of-way in the area for purposes of roadway location, as well as assisting the Committee with any decisions regarding line-of-sight at the intersection. Mr. Bezanson is hoping to move forward with this as the weather improves in the spring. He is hopeful that he'll have the survey proposal and more information next for next month's meeting.

#### **6. 197 Columbus Avenue-Requesting Handicap Spot (kept in committee)**

Councilor Rice summarized the issue. This is the old hardware store. There was an email sent last month regarding an elderly woman who goes to the hair salon to get her hair done and she was requesting a handicap parking spot on Columbus Avenue in front of the salon as sometimes she can't find a suitable parking spot.

Councilor Rice stated that the Committee thought it would be prudent to add a handicap parking space at the time, so a motion was made; but, the motion was rescinded following discussion regarding parking spaces that may be available on the business's parcel, and they were looking into some other options. Councilor Lachapelle said that if there is handicap spot on Columbus Avenue shouldn't there be a curb cut? Mr. Bezanson said yes and they would look to see if something there was sufficient. Mr. Rice was going to reach out to the business owner to see if he would restripe the parking lot himself. Councilor Lachapelle said couldn't the owner of the building put a handicap parking sign up on the building? Mr. Bezanson said yes, handicap parking spaces need to have proper signage. Councilor Berlin asked whether a handicap parking space in a private lot is enforceable. Deputy Chief Thomas said yes, they can enforce if it is properly posted. Councilor LaRochelle said you might want to check on legal requirements for handicap parking. Kept in committee for next month. Councilor Rice asked if the City offers any type of assistance with supplying businesses with signs to make sure they meet the requirements. Mr. Bezanson said they have not in the past. Councilor Lachapelle asked Mr. Bezanson roughly how much a handicap sign would cost. Mr. Bezanson said a sign might cost approximately \$40.

#### **7. Discussion of the Ambulance Contract**

Councilor Rice summarized the issue. He stated that he didn't intend this to be a discussion item; he just wanted to update the Committee. He stated that last year under Mayor McCarley an Ambulance Service Committee was formed with Councilor Walker, Councilor Hainey, himself, Deputy Chief Wilder, and Deputy Finance Director Sullivan as City representatives. Their charge was to evaluate bringing ambulance service under the City's umbrella rather than contracting the services out. Councilor Lachapelle said someone from Frisbee will be presenting on the topic at the February City Council Workshop meeting.

#### **8. E911 Update**

Councilor Rice summarized the issue. Assistant Chief Wilder said he had nothing to report for this month.

#### **9. Emergency Management Update**

Councilor Rice summarized the issue. Interim Fire Chief Plummer said vaccines continue throughout the State and in Rochester and they have administered 490 second doses along with 50 first doses of the vaccines in the schools and vaccinated City employees. The latest storm produced some damage throughout the State, but Rochester had very minor incidents and no real damage.

#### **10. Other**

##### **Tebbetts Road and Blackwater Road- Streetlight**

Mr. Bezanson said that the streetlight at Tebbetts Road and Blackwater Road has been installed.

**Lowell Street Speed Limit Signs**

Councilor Rice explained to the Public Safety Committee that there were motions approved at last month's meeting that didn't make it onto the full City Council agenda. These motions were related to signage on Lowell Street; Councilor Rice will bring these up for a vote at the next City Council meeting.

**Items for Public Safety Committee Agenda**

Councilor Rice asked that if any Committee member has an item for the agenda, please email Laura directly and copy himself and Councilor Lachapelle with documentation and thoughts on the issue. He mentioned that it is a fun committee that affects a lot of positive changes in the City.

Councilor Rice adjourned the meeting at 6:31 pm.

***The minutes were respectfully submitted by Laura J. McDormand, Admin. Assistant II.***